

Introduction to Data Cleaning

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References

- No single reference!
- “Data Quality: Concepts, Methodologies and Techniques”, C. Batini and M. Scannapieco, Springer-Verlag, 2006 (Chaps. 1, 2, and 4)
- Slides “Data Quality and Data Cleansing” course, Felix Naumann, Winter 2014/15
- “Foundations of Data Quality Management”, W. Fan and F. Geerts, 2012
- Oliveira, P. (2009). “Detecção e correcção de problemas de qualidade de dados: Modelo, Sintaxe e Semântica”. PhD thesis, U. do Minho.

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So far...

- We've studied how to perform:
 - String matching
- efficiently and effectively.
- We've seen how string matching is important in data integration
- Now, we'll see how string matching is important in **data cleaning**

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Example (1)

Table R

Name	SSN	Addr
Jack Lemmon	430-871-8294	Maple St
Harrison Ford	292-918-2913	Culver Blvd
Tom Hanks	234-762-1234	Main St
...

Table S

Name	SSN	Addr
Ton Hanks	234-162-1234	Main Street
Kevin Spacey	-	Frost Blvd
Jack Lemon	430-817-8294	Maple Street
...

- Find records from different datasets that could be the same entity

Example (2)

```
<country>
  <name> United States of America </name>
  <cities> New York, Los Angeles, Chicago </
    cities>
  <lakes>
    <name> Lake Michigan </name>
  </lakes>
</country>
```

```
<country>
  United States
  <city> New York </city>
  <city> Los Angeles </city>
  <lakes>
    <lake> Lake Michigan </lake>
  </lakes>
</country>
```

and

are the same
object?

Example (3)

P. Bernstein, D. Chiu: Using Semi-Joins to Solve Relational Queries. JACM 28(1): 25-40(1981)

Philip A. Bernstein, Dah-Ming W. Chiu, Using Semi-Joins to Solve Relational Queries, Journal of the ACM (JACM), v.28 n.1, p.25-40, Jan. 1981

- These two bibliographic references concern the same publication!

The three examples refer to the same problem that is known under different names:

- ❑ approximate duplicate detection
- ❑ record linkage
- ❑ entity resolution
- ❑ merge-purge
- ❑ data matching ...

It is one of the data quality problems addressed by **data cleaning**

Outline

- Introduction to data cleaning
- Application contexts of data cleaning
- Data quality dimensions
- Taxonomy of data quality problems
- Data quality process
- Main data quality tools
- Real-world examples

Why Data Cleaning?

Data in the real world is **dirty**

incomplete: lacking attribute values, lacking certain attributes of interest, or containing only aggregate data

- e.g., occupation=""

noisy: containing errors (spelling, phonetic and typing errors, word transpositions, multiple values in a single free-form field) or outliers

- e.g., Salary="-10"

inconsistent: containing discrepancies in codes or names (synonyms and nicknames, prefix and suffix variations, abbreviations, truncation and initials)

- e.g., Age="42" Birthday="03/07/1997"

- e.g., was rating "1,2,3", now rating "A, B, C"

- e.g., discrepancy between approximate duplicate records

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Data Quality Problems (Dirty Data)

	Representation	Contradictions	Ref. integrity																												
CUST	<table border="1"><thead><tr><th>CNr</th><th>Name</th><th>Birthday</th><th>Age</th><th>Sex</th><th>Phone</th><th>ZIP</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>1234</td><td>Costa, Rui</td><td>18.2.80</td><td>37</td><td>m</td><td>999999999</td><td>1000</td></tr><tr><td>1234</td><td>Ana Costa</td><td>32.2.70</td><td>37</td><td>m</td><td>965432123</td><td>55555</td></tr><tr><td>1235</td><td>Rui Costa</td><td>18.2.80</td><td>27</td><td>m</td><td>963124568</td><td>1000</td></tr></tbody></table>	CNr	Name	Birthday	Age	Sex	Phone	ZIP	1234	Costa, Rui	18.2.80	37	m	999999999	1000	1234	Ana Costa	32.2.70	37	m	965432123	55555	1235	Rui Costa	18.2.80	27	m	963124568	1000		
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1235	Rui Costa	18.2.80	27	m	963124568	1000																									
Uniqueness																															
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Typos																															

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Impact of Data Quality Problems

- **Incorrect prices** in inventory retail databases [English 1999]
 - Costs for consumers 2.5 billion \$
 - 80% of barcode-scan-errors to the disadvantage of consumer
- **IRS 1992**: almost 100,000 tax refunds not deliverable [English 1999]
- 50% to 80% of computerized **criminal records in the U.S.** were found to be inaccurate, incomplete, or ambiguous. [Strong et al. 1997a]
- **US-Postal Service**: of 100,000 mass-mailings up to 7,000 undeliverable due to incorrect addresses [Pierce 2004]

IRS might be after you — to mail you a check

Incorrect addresses stall nearly 1,500 Tennessee refunds

By BONNA de la CRUZ
Staff Writer

Now that Tilcia L. Menifee knows that she'll be getting \$500 in a tax refund from Uncle Sam, she can do some Christmas shopping, she said.

Why Is Data Dirty?

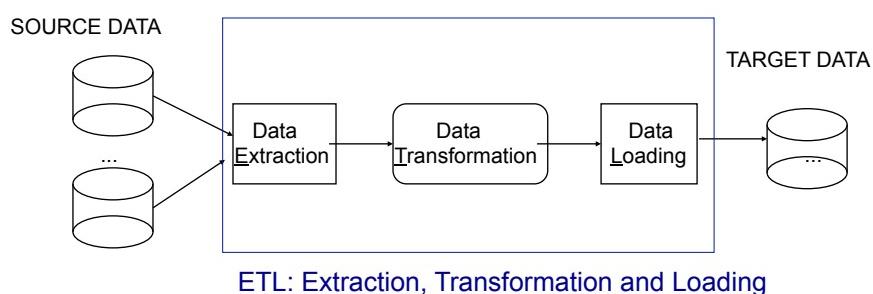
- **Incomplete data** comes from:
 - non available data value when collected
 - different criteria between the time when the data was collected and when it is analyzed
 - human/hardware/software problems
- **Noisy data** comes from:
 - data collection: faulty instruments
 - data entry: human or computer errors
 - data transmission
- **Inconsistent (and duplicate) data** comes from:
 - Different data sources, so non-uniform naming conventions/data codes
 - Functional dependency and/or referential integrity violation

Application contexts

- Integrate data from different sources
 - E.g., populating a DW from different operational data stores or a mediator-based architecture
- Eliminate errors and duplicates within a single source
 - E.g., duplicates in a file of customers
- Migrate data from a source schema into a different fixed target schema
 - E.g., discontinued application packages
- Convert poorly structured data into structured data
 - E.g., processing data collected from the Web

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When materializing the integrated data (data warehousing)...



70% of the time in a data warehousing project is spent with the ETL process

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Why is Data Cleaning Important?

Activity of converting source data into target data without errors, duplicates, and inconsistencies, i.e.,

Cleaning and Transforming to get...

High-quality data!

- **No quality data, no quality decisions!**

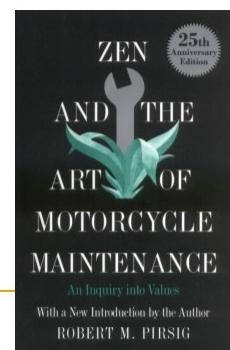
- Quality decisions must be based on good quality data (e.g., duplicate or missing data may cause incorrect or even misleading statistics)

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Quality

***"Even though quality
cannot be defined, you
know what it is."***

Robert Pirsig



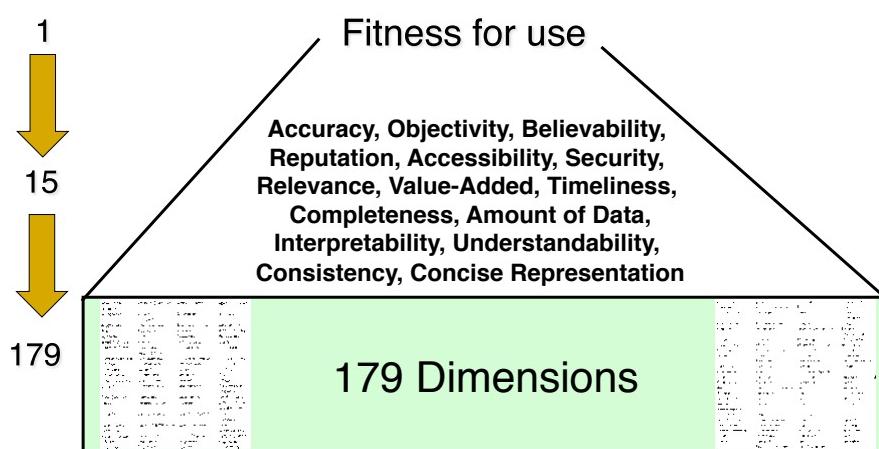
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Outline

- Introduction to data cleaning
- Application contexts of data cleaning
- **Data quality dimensions**
- Taxonomy of data quality problems
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What is Data of Good Quality?



Category	IQ Criteria	TDQM	MBIS	Weikum	DWQ	SCOUG	Chen
Content-related Criteria	Accuracy	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
	Documentation				Yes		
	Relevancy	Yes	Yes		Yes		Yes
	Value-Added	Yes				Yes	
	Completeness	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
	Interpretability	Yes			Yes		
Technical Criteria	Timeliness	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
	Reliability			Yes			
	Latency			Yes			Yes
	Performability			Yes		Yes	
	Response time		Yes	Yes			Yes
	Security	Yes		Yes	Yes		
	Accessibility	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	
	Price	Yes		Yes		Yes	
Intellectual Criteria	Customer Support						Yes
	Believability	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	
	Reputation	Yes	Yes		Yes		
Instantiation related Criteria	Objectivity	Yes					
	Verifiability			Yes			
	Amount of data	Yes	Yes				Yes
	Understandability	Yes	Yes				
Consistency related Criteria	Concise represent.	Yes					
	Consistent represent.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	

Data Quality Dimensions (classical)

Accuracy

- ❑ Refers to the closeness of values in a database to the true values of the entities that the data in the database represent; if it is not 100% that means that there are errors in data

Example: "Jhn" vs. "John"

Completeness

- ❑ Concerns whether the database has complete information to answer queries
- ❑ Partial knowledge of the records in a table or of the attributes in a record

Currency

- ❑ Aims at identifying the current values of entities represented by tuples in a database and to answer queries using those values

Example: Residence (Permanent) Address: out-dated vs. up-to-dated

Consistency

- ❑ Refers to the validity and integrity of data representing real-world entities; if it is violated, leads to discrepancies and conflicts in the data

Example: ZIP Code and City inconsistent

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Accuracy

- Closeness between a value v and a value v' , considered as the correct representation of the real-world phenomenon that v aims to represent.
 - Ex: for a person name “John”, $v' = \text{John}$ is correct, $v = \text{Jhn}$ is incorrect

Syntactic accuracy: closeness of a value v to the elements of the corresponding definition domain D

- Ex: if $v = \text{Jack}$, even if $v' = \text{John}$, v is considered syntactically correct, because it is an admissible value in the domain of people names.
- Measured by means of **comparison functions** (e.g., edit distance) that evaluate the distance between v and the values of the domain

Semantic accuracy: closeness of the value v to the true value v'

- Measured with a <yes, no> or <correct, not correct> domain
- Coincides with **correctness**
- The corresponding true value has to be known

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Ganularity of accuracy definition

- Accuracy may refer to:
 - a single value of a relation attribute
 - an attribute or column
 - a relation
 - the whole database

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Metrics for quantifying accuracy

- Weak accuracy error
 - Characterizes accuracy errors that do not affect identification of tuples
- Strong accuracy error
 - Characterizes accuracy errors that affect identification of tuples
- Percentage of accurate tuples
 - Characterizes the fraction of accurate tuples matched with a reference table

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Completeness

- “The extent to which data are of sufficient breadth, depth, and scope for the task in hand.”
- Three types:
 - Schema completeness: degree to which concepts and their properties are not missing from the schema
 - Column completeness: evaluates the missing values for a specific property or column in a table.
 - Population completeness: evaluates missing values with respect to a reference population

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Completeness of relational data

- The completeness of a table characterizes the extent to which the table represents the real world.
 - Can be characterized with respect to:
 - The presence/absence and meaning of null values
- Example: In Person(name, surname, birthdate, email), if email is null may indicate the person has no mail (no incompleteness), email exists but is not known (incompleteness), it is not known whether Person has an email (incompleteness may not be the case)
- Validity of open world assumption (OWA) or closed world assumption (CWA)
 - OWA: assumes that in addition to missing values, some tuples representing real-world entities may also be missing
 - CWA: assumes the database has collected all the tuples representing real-world entities, but the values of some attributes in those tuples are possible missing

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Metrics for quantifying completeness (1)

- Model without null values with OWA
 - Needs a reference relation $\text{ref}(r)$ for a relation r , that contains all the tuples that satisfy the schema of r

$$C(r) = |r| / |\text{ref}(r)|$$

Example: according to a registry of Lisbon municipality, the number of citizens is 2 million. If a company stores data about Lisbon citizens for the purpose of its business and that number is 1,400,000 then $C(r) = 0,7$

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Metrics for quantifying completeness (2)

- Model with null values with CWA: specific definitions for different granularities:
 - Values: to capture the presence of null values for some fields of a tuple
 - Tuple: to characterize the completeness of a tuple wrt the values of all its fields:
 - Evaluates the % of specified values in the tuple wrt the total number of attributes of the tuple itself
- Example: Student(stID, name, surname, vote, examdate)
Equal to 1 for (6754, Mike, Collins, 29, 7/17/2004)
Equal to 0.8 for (6578, Julliane, Merrals, NULL, 7/17/2004)

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Metrics for quantifying completeness (3)

- Attribute: to measure the number of null values of a specific attribute in a relation
 - Evaluates % of specified values in the column corresponding to the attribute wrt the total number of values that should have been specified.

Example: For calculating the average of votes in Student, a notion of the completeness of vote should be useful

- Relations: to capture the presence of null values in the whole relation
 - Measures how much info is represented in the relation by evaluating the content of the info actually available wrt the maximum possible content, i.e., without null values.

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Time-related dimensions

Currency: concerns how promptly data are updated

- ❑ Example: if the residential address of a person is updated (it corresponds to the address where the person lives) then the currency is high

Volatility: characterizes the frequency with which data vary in time

- ❑ Example: Birth dates (volatility zero) vs stock quotes (high degree of volatility)

Timeliness: expresses how current data are for the task in hand

- ❑ Example: The timetable for university courses can be current by containing the most recent data, but it cannot be timely if it is available only after the start of the classes.

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Metrics of time-related dimensions

■ Last update metadata for currency

- ❑ Straightforward for data types that change with a fixed frequency

■ Length of time that data remain valid for volatility

■ Currency + check that data are available before the planned usage time for timeliness

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Consistency

- Captures the **violation of semantic rules** defined over a set of data items, where data items can be tuples of relational tables or records in a file
 - **Integrity constraints** in relational data
 - Domain constraints, key definitions, inclusion and functional dependencies

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Other dimensions

- **Interpretability**: concerns the documentation and metadata that are available to correctly interpret the meaning and properties of data sources
- **Synchronization** between different time series: concerns proper integration of data having different time stamps.
- **Accessibility**: measures the ability of the user to access the data from his/her own culture, physical status/functions, and technologies available.

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- **Taxonomy of data quality problems**
- Data quality process
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Taxonomy of data quality problems [Oliveira 2009]

- Value-level
- Value-set (attribute/column) level
- Record level
- Relation level
- Multiple relations level

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Value level

Missing value: value not filled in a not null attribute

- Ex: birth date = “

Syntax violation: value does not satisfy the syntax rule defined for the attribute

- Ex: zip code = 27655-175; syntactical rule: xxxx-xxx

Spelling error

- Ex: city = ‘Lsboa’, instead of ‘Lisbon’

Domain violation: value does not belong to the valid domain set

- Ex: age = 240; age: {0, 120}

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Value-set and Record levels

Value-set level

- **Existence of synonyms:** attribute takes different values, but with the same meaning
 - Ex: emprego = ‘futebolista’; emprego = ‘jogador futebol’
- **Existence of homonyms:** same word used with diff meanings
 - Ex: same name refers to different authors of a publication
- **Uniqueness violation:** unique attribute takes the same value more than once
 - Ex: two clients have the same ID number
- **Integrity constraint violation**
 - Ex: sum of the values of percent attribute is more than 100

Record level

- **Integrity constraint violation**
 - Ex: total price of a product is different from price plus taxes

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Relation level

Heterogeneous data representations: different ways of representing the same real world entity

- Ex: name = 'John Smith'; name = 'Smith, John'

Functional dependency violation

- Ex: (2765-175, 'Estoril') and (2765-175, 'Oeiras')

Existence of approximate duplicates

- Ex: (1, André Fialho, 12634268) and (2, André Pereira Fialho, 12634268)

Integrity constraint violation

- Ex: sum of salaries is superior to the max established

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Multiple tables level

Heterogeneous data representations

- Ex: one table stores meters, another stores inches

Existence of synonyms

Existence of homonyms

Different granularities: same real world entity represented with diff. granularity levels

- Ex: age: {0-30, 31-60, > 60}; age: {0-25, 26-40, 40-65, >65}

Referential integrity violation

Existence of approximate duplicates

Integrity constraint violation

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Data Quality Process

1. **Data Quality Auditing (Assessment)**
 - ❑ Data Profiling
 - ❑ Data Analysis
2. **Data Quality Improvement**
 - ❑ Data Cleaning
 - ❑ Data Enrichment

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Data quality auditing

- Constituted by:

- Data profiling – analysing data sources to identify data quality problems
- Data analysis – statistical evaluation, logical study and application of data mining algorithms to define data patterns and rules

- Main goals:

- To obtain a definition of the data: metadata collection
- To check violations to metadata definition
- To detect other data quality problems that belong to a given taxonomy
- To supply recommendations in what concerns the data cleaning task

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Data Profiling

- Data source discovery
 - Metadata
- Schema discovery
 - Schema matching and mapping
 - Profiling for metadata (keys, foreign keys, data types, ...)
- Data discovery
 - Column-level: Null-values, domains, patterns, value distributions / histograms
 - Table-level: Data mining, rules

Typical techniques used in data quality auditing

- Dictionaries of words: so that attribute values are compared with one or more dictionaries of the domain
 - Ex: wordnet
- Algorithms to detect functional dependencies and their violations
- Algorithms to detect duplicates
 - String matching for string fields
 - Character-based
 - Toke-based
 - Phonetic algorithms
 - Record matching
 - Rule-based
 - Probabilistic
 - ...

Nome	Cod.Postal	Localidade
Maria	2765	Estoril
António	2765	S.João Esoril
José	2780	Oeiras
Andreia	1000	Lisboa
Manuela	2865	Setúbal

 Localidade=>Cod.Postal

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Data quality improvement

- Includes often:
 - Data transformation – set of operations that source data must undergo to fit target schema
 - Data cleaning – detecting, removing and correcting dirty data (including approximate duplicate elimination)
 - Data enrichment – use of additional information to improve data quality
- Main goal:
 - To **correct** the data quality problems detected during the data quality auditing process

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Typical techniques used in data cleaning and transformation

- Dictionaries of words
- Libraries of pre-defined cleaning functions
- Machine learning techniques
- Techniques for consolidating approximate duplicates

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Methodology for data cleaning

1. Extraction of the individual fields that are relevant
 2. Standardization of record fields
 3. Correction of data quality problems at value level
 - Missing values, syntax violation, etc
 4. Correction of data quality problems at value-set level and record level
 - Synonyms, homonyms, uniqueness violation, integrity constraint violation, etc
 5. Correction of data quality problems at relation level
 - Violation of functional dependencies, duplicate elimination, etc
 6. Correction of data quality problems problems at multiple relations level
 - Referential integrity violation, duplicate elimination, etc
- User feedback
 - To solve instances of data quality problems not addressed by automatic methods
 - Effectiveness of the data cleaning and transformation process must be always measured for a sample of the data set

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Data Cleaning Tasks

1. Extraction from sources
 - Technical and syntactic obstacles
2. Transformation
 - Schematic obstacles
3. Standardization
 - Syntactic and semantic obstacles
4. Duplicate detection
 - Similarity functions
 - Algorithms
5. Data fusion / consolidation
 - Semantic obstacles
6. Loading into warehouse / presenting to user

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Human Interaction is Needed

- Components to implement
 - Wrappers for technical heterogeneity
 - Schema integration based on correspondences
 - Similarity measure for schema elements
 - Similarity measure for records
- Knobs to turn
 - Thresholds for similarity measures
 - Partition size / window size
- Expert guidance
 - Rule selection / rule specification
 - Schema matching
 - Duplicate detection
 - Data fusion

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Existing technology for ensuring data quality

Ad-hoc programs written in a programming language like C or Java or using an RDBMS proprietary language

- Programs difficult to optimize and maintain

RDBMS mechanisms for guaranteeing integrity constraints

- Do not address important data instance problems

Data transformation workflow scripts using a **data cleaning/profiling tool**

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Existing technology for ensuring data quality

Ad-hoc programs written in a programming language like C or Java or using an RDBMS proprietary language

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- Do not address important data instance problems

➤ **Data transformation workflow scripts using an data cleaning/profiling tool**

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Criteria for comparing commercial data quality tools (1)

Debugger:

Data lineage: data lineage or provenance identifies the set of source data items that produced a given data item

Breakpoints: breakpoints is an intentional stopping or pausing place in a cleaning program put in place for debugging purposes

Edit values: the user can edit values during debugging

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Criteria for comparing commercial data quality tools (2)

Profiling:

Rules: A rule is a business logic that defines conditions applied to data. They are used to validate the data and to measure data quality

Filters: A filter is used to split the data tuples in different groups. Each group should be validated by a different set of rules.

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Criteria for comparing commercial data quality tools (3)

Execution:

User involvement: Support for user interaction in a data cleaning process

Incremental updates: The ability to incrementally update data targets, instead of rebuilding them from scratch every time

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Commercial Data Cleaning Tools(2014) (1/3)

Tools	Debugger			Profiling		Execution	
	Data lineage	Breakpoints	Edit values	Rules	Filters	User involvement	Incremental updates
Informatica PowerCenter	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y
IBM Information Server	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	N	Y
Talend Open Studio	N	Y	N	Y	Y	N	Y
Oracle Data Integrator	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	N	Y
SQL Server Integration Services	Y	Y	N	Y	N	N	Y
SAS Data Integration Studio	Y	N	N	Y	Y	N	Y
Pentaho Data Integration	N	N	N	Y	N	N	Y
Clover ETL	N	N	Y	Y	Y	N	Y

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Criteria for comparing commercial data quality tools (4)

Extensibility:

Create operators: the user can define new operators

Modify operators: the user can modify standard operators

User Interface:

Drag and drop: the user can define data quality processes using a drag and drop interface

Editor: the user can define and edit data quality processes modeled as workflows using a graphical interface

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Commercial Data cleaning tools (2014) (2/3)

Tools	Extensibility		User Interface	
	Create Operators	Modify Operators	Drag and Drop	Grahical Editor
Informatica PowerCenter	Y (Java)	N	Y	Y
IBM Information Server	Y (Java)	N	Y	Y
Talend Open Studio	Y (Java, Groovy)	Y (Java)	Y	Y
Oracle Data Integrator	Y	Y	Y	Y
SQL Server Integration Services	Y (C#, VB)	N	Y	Y
SAS Data Integration Studio	Y (SAS)	Y (SAS)	Y	Y
Pentaho Data Integration	Y (Javascript)	N	Y	Y
Clover ETL	Y (CTL)	N	Y	Y

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Criteria for comparing commercial data quality tools (5)

Scalability:

Grid: the tool can run a cleaning process on a collection of computer resources from multiple locations

Partitioning: the user can partition the data and run each partition independently (on different CPUs or cores)

Pushdown optimization: the tool translates the transformation logic into SQL queries and sends the SQL queries to the database. The database engine executes the SQL queries to process the transformations

Others:

Free version: the tool has a free version

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Commercial Data Cleaning Tools (2014) (3/3)

Tools	Scalability			Others
	Grid	Partitioning	Pushdown Optimization	
Informatica PowerCenter	Y	Y	Y	Y
IBM Information Server	Y	Y	Y	N
Talend Open Studio	Y	N	Optional ELT	Y
Oracle Data Integrator	Y	N	ELT	Y
SQL Server Integration Services	N	Y	-	Y (IST)
SAS Data Integration Studio	Y	Y	Y	Y (IST)
Pentaho Data Integration	Y	Y	N	Y
Clover ETL	Y	Y	N	Y

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Research Data cleaning tools (2014) (1/2)

Tools	Detection DQ problems		Repair DQ problems		
	Constraints	Statistical	Search	ML/St	Data Transformations
Cleenex	QCs	N	N	N	Y
Llunatic	Egds	N	Y	N	N
Nadeef	CFDs, MDs	N	Y	N	N
Guided data repair	CFDs	N	Y	Y	N
Scare	N	Y	N	Y	N
Eracer	N	Y	N	Y	N
Continuous data cleaning	FDs	N	Y	Y	N

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Criteria for comparing research data cleaning tools (1)

Detection:

Constraints – use of rules or/and conditions

- EGDs - equality generating dependencies
- QCs - quality constraints
- CFDs - Conditional functional dependencies
- MDs - Matching dependencies

Statistical – dirty tuples are detected based on simple statistics or in complex data analysis

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Criteria for comparing research data cleaning tools (1)

Repair:

Search: The system explores the space of possible clean tables and heuristically selects the best table

ML/St: The system uses machine learning and/or statistical models to infer data values or to prune the search

Data transformations: The system models the data cleaning process as a data transformation graph

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Criteria for comparing research data cleaning tools (3)

User Interface:

Graphical interface: the system provides a visualizing tool and menus to interact

User edition: the system allows the user to edit data values

Others:

Scalability: the system execution time grows linearly with the number of input tuples

Streaming: the system receives tuples and processes each of them treat them individually (opposed to batch processing)

Extensible: the system allows the user to modify and/or insert new algorithms

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Research Data cleaning tools (2014) (1/2)

Tools	User Interface		Others		
	Graphical Interface	User edition	Extensible	Streaming	Scalability
Cleenex	Y	Y	Matching algorithms	N	N
Llunatic	Y	Y	Cost Managers	N	Y
Nadeef	Y	N	Repair algorithms	N	N
Guided data repair	N	Y	N	N	N
Scare	N	N	N	N	Y
Eracer	N	N	N	N	N
Continuous data cleaning	N	N	N	Y	Y

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Outline

- Introduction to data cleaning
- Application contexts of data cleaning
- Data quality dimensions
- Taxonomy of data quality problems
- Data quality process
- Main data quality tools
- **Real-world examples**

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Death by Typo

'Resurrected,' but still wallowing in red tape

Government records incorrectly kill off thousands, and there's no easy fix

By Alex Johnson and Nancy Amons
Reporters
MSNBC and NBC News
updated 6:21 p.m. ET Feb. 29, 2008

For a dead woman, Laura Todd is awfully articulate.

"I don't think people realize how difficult it is to be dead when you're not," said Todd, who is very much alive and kicking in Nashville, Tenn., even though the federal government has said otherwise for many years.

Todd's struggle started eight years ago with a typo in government records. The government has reassured her numerous times that it has cleared up the confusion, but the problems keep coming.

Story continues below ↓



Does this woman look dead to you?
The government says Toni Anderson is dead, but she insists she is very much alive. David MacAnally of NBC affiliate WTHR reports from Muncie, Ind.

NBC News Channel

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Google searches for Britney Spears

488941 britney spears	29 britney spears	9 brittany spears	5 brney spears	3 britty spears	2 britreny spears
40134 brittany spears	29 brittany spears	9 brittanay spears	5 brotny spears	3 britmny spears	2 britnay spears
36315 brittney spears	29 brittney spears	9 brittiany spears	5 brotny spears	3 brittheey spears	2 brittney spears
24342 brittany spears	29 bliney spears	9 britn spears	5 bruteny spears	3 britmehy spears	2 brittne spears
7331 britt spears	26 brittney spears	9 britnew spears	5 blyney spears	3 britmely spears	2 britain spears
6633 britney spears	26 breitney spears	9 britney spears	5 britney spears	3 britnesy spears	2 britane spears
2696 brittney spears	26 britney spears	9 brittny spears	5 grtney spears	3 brittety spears	2 britaneny spears
1807 britney spears	26 britney spears	9 britny spears	5 spritney spears	3 brittex spears	2 britatia spears
1635 brittney spears	26 britneyt spears	9 brittny spears	4 bittny spears	3 britttxxx spears	2 britann spears
1479 brittney spears	26 brittan spears	9 brittny spears	4 brnitney spears	3 brittly spears	2 britanna spears
1479 brittanny spears	26 brittne spears	9 brythy spears	4 brandy spears	3 brittney spears	2 brittanne spears
1338 brittney spears	26 brittany spears	9 rbritney spears	4 brbritney spears	3 brittneyy spears	2 brittan spears
1211 britt spears	24 breitney spears	8 birtiny spears	4 bretiny spears	3 brittiney spears	2 britannu spears
1096 brittney spears	24 britney spears	8 biltney spears	4 bretny spears	3 brittneey spears	2 britanyl spears
991 brittanay spears	24 brightney spears	8 brattany spears	4 bretlny spears	3 britttney spears	2 britnaty spears
991 brittney spears	24 brinlney spears	8 breilney spears	4 brfflny spears	3 brittneyy spears	2 brittene spears
811 brittney spears	24 britanty spears	8 breleny spears	4 brittany spears	3 britteny spears	2 britenay spears
811 brittney spears	24 britenny spears	8 brightny spears	4 brieteny spears	3 brittneyy spears	2 britennel spears
664 brittney spears	24 britini spears	8 britnlay spears	4 briti spears	3 brittney spears	2 briteniy spears
664 brittney spears	24 britmwy spears	8 britinty spears	4 britlny spears	3 britotny spears	2 britenys spears
664 brittney spears	24 brittni spears	8 britonley spears	4 brittlny spears	3 britaney spears	2 britianey spears
601 brittney spears	24 brittine spears	8 britanys spears	4 brinie spears	3 britiany spears	2 britin spears
601 britt spears	21 brittney spears	8 brittley spears	4 brittoner spears	3 brittay spears	2 britinary spears
544 brittaney spears	21 brittany spears	8 brittneyb spears	4 brittne spears	3 brittneyy spears	2 britmy spears
544 brittney spears	21 briteny spears	8 brittny spears	4 britaby spears	3 brittany spears	2 britnane spears
364 brittney spears	21 bratney spears	8 brittny spears	4 brataey spears	3 brittney spears	2 britnat spears
364 brittyny spears	21 britani spears	8 brittni spears	4 britalney spears	3 brittel spears	2 britnbey spears
523 brittney spears	21 britanie spears	8 brittany spears	4 brittine spears	3 britlyn spears	2 britndy spears
269 brittney spears	21 britanay spears	8 brittneay spears	4 brittiney spears	3 brittley spears	2 britnh spears
269 brittneys spears	21 brittay spears	7 brittney spears	4 brittiney spears	3 driftney spears	2 brittneey spears
244 britt spears	21 brittney spears	7 brittney spears	4 brittneay spears	3 prettney spears	2 brittneay spears
244 brittney spears	21 britny spears	7 brittly spears	4 britmel spears	3 rbrittney spears	2 britneay spears
220 breatney spears	21 britany spears	7 breatney spears	4 britneuy spears	2 baritany spears	2 britnehy spears
220 brittany spears	19 britney spears	7 britnay spears	4 britnewy spears	2 bbritney spears	2 britneym spears
201472 brittney spears	19 britny spears	7 brittby spears	4 brittmeay spears	2 bbttny spears	2 britneyy spears
147 britt spears	19 brittany spears	7 brittje spears	4 brittney spears	2 brittneyy spears	2 brittney spears
147 brittney spears	19 brittne spears	7 brittneu spears	4 brittneay spears	2 brittneay spears	2 brittneay spears
147 britt spears	19 brittnty spears	7 brittneu spears	4 brittney spears	2 brittneyy spears	2 brittneyy spears

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Source: <http://www.google.com/jobs/britney.html>

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FIFA registration form (2010)

Nationality: Select
Country of Residence: Palestine
Mother Tongue: Palestine, British Mandate
Preferred FIFA Language: Panama
Secondary FIFA Language: Paraguay
Organisation Name: Representations of Czechs and Slovaks (RCS)
Organisation Role (Prof): Russia
Notes (Max 2000 chars):

Country of Residence:

- Select
- Palestine
- Palestine, British Mandate
- Panama
- Paraguay
- Peru
- Philippines
- Poland
- Portugal
- Puerto Rico
- Qatar
- Representations of Czechs and Slovaks (RCS)
- Republic of Ireland
- Réunion
- Rhodesia
- Romania
- Russia
- Rwanda
- Saar
- Samoa
- San Marino
- São Tomé e Príncipe
- Saudi Arabia
- Scotland
- Senegal
- Serbia
- Serbia and Montenegro
- Seychelles
- Sierra Leone

Select
German Democratic Republic
German Democratic Republic
Germany
Germany Federal Republic
Ghana
Gibraltar
Great Britain

with a public account such as Hotmail or
Select
All Ireland (all-Ireland pre 1921)
All Ireland (all-Ireland pre 1921)
American Samoa
Andorra
Angola

Wales
Yemen
Yemen PDR
YUGOSLAVIA
Zaire
Zambia
Zimbabwe

Select
Saar
Saar
Samoa
San Marino
São Tomé e Príncipe
Saudi Arabia
Scotland

69

German Umlaute

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Next lecture

- Data Matching

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